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Managing the Accident Investigation

The accident investigation is a complex project that requires coping with a significant workload, time constraints, sensitive issues, and dependence on the cooperation of others. To achieve success and efficiency, the investigation process must be well planned, managed, and controlled. The board chairperson is responsible for managing every aspect of the investigation, including the process and board member activities. The chairperson's initial decisions and actions will influence the tone, tempo, and degree of difficulty associated with the entire investigation. This section provides the board chairperson with techniques and tools for planning, managing, and controlling the investigation.

5.1 Project Planning

To be effective, project planning must occur early in the investigation. The chairperson should develop a plan for the investigation no later than the end of the third day following the accident. The plan, based on information from the accident scene, includes a preliminary report outline to use for tasking the board and a schedule for completing the investigation. It also addresses the resources, logistical requirements, and protocols that will be needed to conduct the investigation.

The chairperson's initial planning activities, which should take place immediately after his/her appointment, are shown in the checklist *Accident Investigation Startup*

Activities List, provided at the end of this section. The chairperson and administrative coordinator can use this list to organize the first few days of the investigation.

5.1.1 Collecting Site Information

Following appointment, the chairperson is responsible for contacting the site to obtain as many details on the accident as possible. The field or program office point of contact or the site readiness team leader is usually designated as the liaison with the board. The chairperson needs the details of the accident to determine appropriate resources, board member expertise, and technical specialists. Furthermore, the chairperson should request background information, including site history, site maps, and organization charts. The *Accident Investigation Preparatory Information Request Form* (provided at the end of this section) can be used to document and track these and other information requests throughout the investigation.

5.1.2 Determining Task Assignments

The chairperson should develop an outline of the accident investigation report, including content and format, and use it to establish tasks for each board member. Board members, advisors, and consultants are given specific assignments and responsibilities based on their areas of expertise in areas such as management systems, work planning and

control, occupational safety and health, training, and any other technical areas directly related to the accident. These assignments include specific tasks related to gathering and analyzing facts, conducting interviews, determining causal factors, developing conclusions and judgments of need, and report writing. Experienced chairpersons have found that it is most useful to assign designated board members specific responsibilities to ensure consistency during the entire investigation.

5.1.3 Preparing a Schedule

The chairperson also prepares a detailed schedule using the generic four-week accident investigation cycle and any specific direction from the appointing official as guidance. The chairperson should establish significant milestones, working back from the appointing official's designated completion date. Table 5-1 shows a list of typical activities to schedule.

Table 5-1. These activities should be included on an accident investigation schedule.

Obtain needed site and facility background information, policies, procedures, and training records
Assign investigation tasks and writing responsibilities
Initiate and complete first draft of accident chronology and facts
Select analytical methods (preliminary)
Complete interviews
Complete first analyses of facts using selected analytical tools; determine whether additional tools are necessary
Obtain necessary photographs and complete illustrations for report
Complete first draft of report elements, up to and including facts and analysis section
Complete development and draft of direct, contributing, and root causes
Complete development and draft of judgments of need
Complete first draft of report for internal review
Complete final analyses
Complete second draft of report for internal review
Conduct factual accuracy review and revise report based on input
Complete report review by Office of Oversight
Complete final draft of report
Brief relevant site and field office managers on findings
Leave site
Complete final production of report

The schedule describes the investigative activities to be conducted over time and sets milestones for their completion (see sample schedule in Figure 5-1). The *Accident Investigation Day Planner: A Guide for Accident Investigation Board Chairpersons* is available from the Program Manager to assist in scheduling investigation activities.

5.1.4 Acquiring Resources

From the first day, the chairperson and administrative coordinator begin acquiring resources for the investigation. This includes securing office space, a dedicated conference room or “command center,” office supplies, computers (available through the Office of Security Evaluations for Type A investigations), a secured area for document storage, tools, and personal protective equipment, if necessary. The site’s accident readiness function should provide many of these resources. The *Accident Investigation Equipment Checklist* (see Section 4) lists resource needs and is designed to help identify and track resource status. The Office of Security Evaluations retains an investigation “readiness kit” containing some of these resources for Type A investigations.

In addition, the board chairperson assures that contracting mechanisms exist and that funding is available for the advisors and consultants required to support the investigation. These activities are coordinated with the Program Manager.

5.1.5 Establishing Information Access and Other Control Protocols

Information access and other control protocols maintain the integrity of the investigation and preserve the privacy and confidentiality of interviewees and other parties. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act require the board, acting on behalf of DOE, to disclose information that the public has a “right to know.” During investigations, the board accesses and generates information covered by these two laws. Disclosures may be made while still protecting individuals from invasion of personal privacy. In answering any disclosure question, the chairperson should obtain guidance from a legal advisor or the FOIA/Privacy Act contact person at the site, field office, or Headquarters.

TIP

When in doubt about releasing or protecting information under the Freedom of Information Act or Privacy Act, consult with a specialist at the field office or Headquarters.

The FOIA provides access to all Federal agency records except those protected from release by exemptions, such as the need to maintain national security. Anyone can use the FOIA to request access to government records. Thus, the board should assure that the information it generates is accurate, relevant, complete, and up to date. For this reason, court reporters should be used to record interviews, and interviewees should be allowed to review and correct transcripts. The board should inform witnesses that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, because the FOIA may require disclosure.

The Privacy Act establishes safeguards for protecting government records on citizens and lawfully admitted permanent residents. The Act includes mandates applicable to investigations. Specifically, the board is responsible for:

- Informing people as to why information about them is being collected and how it will be used
- Ensuring that information subject to the Privacy Act is not disclosed without the consent of the individual, except under

certain conditions. Information that can normally be disclosed includes name, present and past positions or “grade” (e.g., GS-13), annual salaries, duty station, and position description. However, the board should not request this information unless it is relevant to the investigation.

The chairperson also is responsible for establishing other protocols relating to information control. These protocol concerns are listed in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2. The chairperson establishes protocols for controlling information.

Protocol	Considerations
Information Security	Keep all investigative evidence and documents locked in a secure area accessible only to board members, advisors, and support staff.
Press Releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Determine whether there is a DOE-designated contact to handle press releases; if so, work with that person to provide appropriate information to the public. ■ The board is not obligated to release any information. However, previous chairpersons have found that issuing an early press release can be helpful. ■ The initial press release usually contains a general description of the accident and the role of the investigation. ■ The board chairperson should review and approve all press releases.
Lines of Communication	Establish liaison with field element management and with the operating contractor at the site, facility, or area involved in the accident to set up clear lines of communication and responsibility.
Format of Information Releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Determine the amount and format of information to be released to the site contractor(s), union advisor, and local DOE office for internal purposes. ■ Never release verbatim interview transcripts or tapes due to the sensitivity of raw information. ■ Do not release preliminary results of analyses. These results can be taken out of context and lead to premature conclusions by the site and the media. ■ Consult with the appointing official before releasing any information.
Approvals for Information Release	Assure that board members, site contractors, and the local DOE office do not disseminate information concerning the board's activities, findings, or products before obtaining the chairperson's approval. Brief the board on what they can reveal to others.

5.2 Managing the Investigation Process

As an investigation is implemented, the chairperson uses a variety of management techniques, including guiding and directing, monitoring performance, providing feedback on performance, and making decisions and changes required to meet the investigation's objectives and schedule. Because these activities are crucial, the chairperson may designate an individual to oversee management activities in case the chairperson becomes unavailable.

5.2.1 Taking Control of the Accident Scene

Before arriving at the site, the chairperson communicates with the point of contact or the appropriate site readiness designee to assure that the scene and evidence are properly secured, preserved, and documented and that preliminary witness information has been gathered. At the accident scene, the chairperson should:

- Obtain briefings from all persons involved in managing the accident response
- Obtain all information and evidence gathered by the site readiness team
- Make a decision about how secure the accident scene must remain during the initial phases of the investigation. *If there are any concerns about loss or contamination of evidence, play it safe and keep the scene restricted from use.*
- Assume responsibility only for activities directly related to the accident and investigation. The chairperson and board members should not take responsibility for approving site activities or procedures, or for recovery, rehabilitation,

or mitigation activities. These functions are the responsibility of line management.

5.2.2 Initial Meeting of the Investigation Board

The chairperson is responsible for ensuring that all board members work as a team and share a common approach to the investigation. As one of the board's first onsite activities, the chairperson typically holds a meeting to provide all board members, advisors, consultants, and support staff with an opportunity to introduce themselves and to give the chairperson an opportunity to brief the board members on:

- The scope of the investigation, emphasizing the need to focus on management systems
- An overview of the accident investigation process, with emphasis on:
 - Streamlined process and limited timeframe to conduct the investigation (if applicable)
 - The schedule and plan for completing the investigation
 - The need to apply the safety management template during the investigation as the means of evaluating management systems
 - Report-writing process.
- Potential analytical and testing techniques to be used
- The roles, responsibilities, and assignments for the chairperson, the board members, and other participants
- Information control and release protocols
- Administrative processes and logistics.

At the meeting, the chairperson clearly communicates expectations and provides direction and guidance for the investigation.

This may involve providing the board with procedures for:

- Handling potential conflicts of interest resulting from using contractor-provided support and obtaining support from other sources
- Storing investigative materials in a secured location and disposing of unneeded yet sensitive materials
- Using logbooks, inventory, checkout lists, or other methods to maintain control and accountability of physical evidence, documents, photographs, and other material pertinent to the investigation
- Recording and tracking incoming and outgoing correspondence
- Accessing the board's work area after hours

In addition, the chairperson may obtain and distribute copies of site and local phone directories or a current list of phone and fax numbers for pertinent individuals and offices at DOE Headquarters, the local field office, and site contractor organizations.

5.2.3 *Developing Teamwork*

The board must work together as a team to finish the investigation within the four-week timeframe. To make this happen, the board chairperson should ensure that strong-willed personalities do not dominate and influence the objectivity of the investigation and that all viewpoints are heard and analyzed.

The chairperson must capitalize on the synergy of the team's collective skills and talents (i.e., the team is likely to make better decisions and provide a higher quality investigation than the same group working individually), while allowing individual actions and decisions. In developing and prioritizing the team process, it is important that the chairperson define for or guide the board members and other participants in:

- **Member relationships:** Friendship is not required, but outright conflict can impede the board's ability to conduct a high-quality investigation. The chairperson can encourage positive relationships by focusing attention on each member's strengths and downplaying weaknesses. The chairperson can facilitate this by arranging time to allow team members to get to know one another and learn about each other's credentials, strengths, and preferences. Some people may feel this is a waste of time; however, effective interpersonal relationships can save time and promote high-quality performance.
- **Communication processes:** It is the chairperson's responsibility to make sure that all members get a chance to speak and that no one member dominates conversations. To serve as an effective role model for effective communication among board members, the chairperson should:
 - Be clear and concise when speaking
 - Use active listening techniques, such as focusing attention on the speaker, paraphrasing, questioning, and refraining from interruption
 - Pay attention to and try to paraphrase non-verbal messages
 - Attempt to understand each speaker's perspective. The chairperson should also make his or her perceptions clear when speaking
 - Seek information and opinions from others, especially the less talkative members. Postpone evaluation until all ideas and arguments have been heard

- Encourage diverse ideas and opinions
 - Suggest ideas, approaches, and compromises.
 - Help keep discussions on track when they start to wander.
- **Decision processes:** The chairperson should gain agreement in advance regarding how particular decisions will be made. Decisions can be made by consensus, by vote, by the chairperson, or by an expert. Each method has strengths and weaknesses, and the method used should be the one that makes the most sense in the particular decision and situation. Team members should be aware of which method will be used, and the decision-making method should stay constant throughout the process.
 - **Roles and responsibilities:** Team members should clearly understand both the formal and informal roles and responsibilities of each board member, consultant, and support personnel. Clarifying these roles helps avoid duplication of effort or omission of critical tasks and reduces power struggles and other conflicts. Board chairpersons should avoid the temptation to reassign tasks when team members encounter problems.
 - **Group processes.** For an effective investigation, group processes must be efficient. Time and energy may be needed to develop these processes. The chairperson should pay attention to and discuss processes that seem to work well, and ask the group to suggest alternatives to processes that are inefficient.

TIP

Teams are more effective than individuals, because team members have a clear purpose, capitalize on each other's strengths, coordinate their efforts, and help each other. Teamwork promotes a higher-quality investigation.

To control team dynamics, the chairperson needs to be aware that groups go through predictable stages as they progress from meeting one another to becoming a high-performance team:

- **Forming:** At this stage, team members get acquainted, discover their purposes, and accept their roles and responsibilities. Members are typically very polite at this stage, and conflict is rare. Little work is accomplished during this stage, as the team is still in the planning phase. The chairperson can speed this stage by formally organizing the group; by defining goals, roles, and responsibilities; and by encouraging members to become comfortable with one another.
- **Storming:** Team members begin to realize the sheer amount of work to be done and may get into conflict regarding roles, planned tasks, and processes for accomplishing the work. There may be power struggles. The team focuses energy on redefining work processes. The chairperson can speed this phase by encouraging open debate of methods and responsibilities and promoting non-defensive, solution-focused communication.
- **Norming:** The team develops norms about roles, planned tasks, and processes for working together. Power issues are settled. Team members start to become productive and assist one another. The chairperson can speed this stage by formalizing new norms, methods, and responsibilities and by encouraging relationship development.

- **Performing:** The team settles into clear roles, understands the strengths of different members, and begins to coordinate efforts to work together effectively. The chairperson can help maintain this stage by encouraging open communication, a “learning from mistakes” philosophy, and celebrating progress.

TIP

Understanding the four typical stages of team development can help the chairperson manage team interactions throughout the accident investigation. Further, understanding these stages can help teams progress.

The chairperson sets the stage for effective teamwork at the very first board meeting. At this meeting, the chairperson should encourage the team to define their goals and tasks, clarify their roles and responsibilities, agree on team processes, and become acquainted with each other’s strengths.

TIP

Many board members may have never worked on an effective team. The chairperson needs to focus on effective team activities, because the members may not immediately see the value of teamwork or may be caught up in their own tasks to the exclusion of the team.

5.2.4 Managing Information Collection

Upon arrival at the accident site, the board begins to collect evidence and facts and to conduct interviews. Table 5-3 provides guidelines to assist the chairperson in monitoring this process.

5.2.5 Coordinating Internal and External Communication

The board chairperson is responsible for coordinating communication both internally (with the appointing official, board members, advisors, consultants, and support staff) and externally (relevant DOE Headquarters managers, local DOE field office, site managers, site contractor(s), and the public). Maintaining effective communications includes:

- Conducting daily board meetings to:
 - Review and share the latest information and evidence
 - Discuss how new information may contribute to analyses
 - Review latest analytical findings and potential causal factors
 - Serve as a check point to ensure that board members are completing their tasks, acting within scope, and not pursuing factual leads of limited potential value
- Obtaining regular verbal or written progress reports from board members and identifying solutions to potential problems
- Using a centralized, visible location for posting assignments and progress reports to keep everyone informed and up to date

Table 5-3. The chairperson should use these guidelines in managing information collection activities.

■ Organize and review witness statements, facts, and background information provided by the site readiness team or other sources and distribute these to the board.
■ Organize a board walkthrough of the accident scene, using the best understanding of the accident chronology available at the time. This can help the board visualize the events of the accident.
■ Ensure that board members preserve and document all evidence from the accident scene.
■ Assign an administrative coordinator to oversee the organization, filing, and security of collected facts and evidence.
■ If deemed appropriate, particularly during sensitive investigations, issue a site or public announcement soliciting information concerning the accident.
■ Oversee development of a standardized list of interview questions to save interviewing time.
■ Ensure that witnesses are identified and interviews scheduled.
■ Identify and initiate any necessary physical tests to be conducted on evidence.
■ Assess and reassess the need for documents, including medical records, training records, policies, and procedures, and direct their collection. Use the <i>Accident Investigation Preparatory Information Request Form</i> provided at the end of the section to document and track information requests.
■ Enlist the aid of technical experts when making decisions about handling or altering physical evidence.
■ Establish a protocol agreeable to the board for analyzing and testing physical evidence.
■ Emphasize to board members that to complete the investigation within schedule, they may not have time to pursue every factual lead of medium to low significance. The focus must remain on identifying and analyzing significant facts that will lead to the development of causal factors and judgments of need.

- Conducting meetings with site managers and contractor(s) to exchange information and to summarize investigation status
- Conducting weekly conference calls with managers from Headquarters, the local field office, and contractors; calling the appointing official on a predetermined basis; and providing written status reports to the appointing official
- Communicating as necessary with the public and media.

TIP

Meetings that maximize efficiency have a set length of time and follow a planned, well focused agenda.

5.2.6 Managing the Analysis

The chairperson is responsible for ensuring that events and causal factors analysis and other methods of analysis begin as soon as initial facts are available. This will help to identify information gaps early, drive the fact

collection process, and identify questions for interviews. The use of accident investigation software is a helpful tool for identifying these information gaps and for organizing causal factors during the analyses. Another technique is to use multicolored adhesive note paper on a wall to portray elements of the events and causal factors chart. A wall-size chart makes it easier for all board members to observe progress, provide input, and make changes. Colored adhesive notes are useful for identifying changes in the chart that need to be entered in the corresponding computerized version of the chart.

As the board proceeds with the analyses, the chairperson should monitor and discuss progress to ensure that:

- Several board members and/or advisors (not one person in isolation) participate to produce a quality result.

TIP

Delegating responsibility for complex analyses to only one individual can produce inferior results. Analyses are strengthened by the input of the entire board and its advisors.

- If analysis and information-gathering functions (e.g., interviewing) are assigned to separate groups of board members, these groups interact regularly to improve coordination, strengthen the analytical process, and maintain appropriate focus.
- Analyses are iterative (i.e., analyses are repeated, each version producing results that approximate the end result more closely). Several iterations of analyses will be needed as new information becomes available.
- Analyses address all organizational concerns, management systems, and line management oversight functions that may have contributed to the accident's causes.
- The causal factors, conclusions, and judgments of need are supported by the facts and analysis.
- Significant facts and resulting analyses do not result in a "dead end"; rather, they are linked to causal factors and judgments of need.

5.2.7 Managing Report Writing

Many investigation boards have found report writing to be the most difficult part of the investigation, often requiring several iterations. Report quality is crucial, because the report is the official record of the investigation. Efforts to conduct a quality investigation lose integrity if the resulting report is poorly written or lacks adequate supporting facts and clear conclusions.

To manage the reporting process, the chairperson should:

- Develop a report outline as soon as possible to facilitate writing assignments, minimize overlap in content between sections, and identify where sections should be added, moved, or deleted
- Begin writing the accident chronology, background information, and facts as soon as information becomes available
- Adhere to required format guidelines and promote ongoing clarification of format, content, and writing styles
- Quickly identify strong and weak writers; pair them, where possible, to avoid a future writing crisis
- Encourage authors to consult with one another frequently to become familiar with the content of each section and to provide input that may contribute to overall quality and reduce redundancy
- If possible, use a technical writer to evaluate grammar, format, technical content, and linkages among facts, analyses, causes, and judgments of need. This is important when several authors have contributed to the report. The technical writer focuses on producing a clear, concise, logical, and well supported report and ensures that the report reads as if one person wrote it.

It is possible to have serious disagreements among board members regarding the interpretation of facts, causal factors, conclusions, and judgments of need. The board chairperson should make a concerted effort to reach consensus among board members on accident causes, conclusions, and judgments of need. When board members cannot reach agreement and the chairperson cannot resolve the difference, the dissenting board member(s) has (have) the option to produce a minority report.

5.2.8 Managing

Onsite Closeout Activities

The investigative portion of the process is considered complete and board members are released when the appointing official formally accepts the final report. Acceptance does not necessarily imply that the report is complete or final. The chairperson is responsible for final editing and production of the report, with assistance from selected board members and administrative support staff. In the case of Type A investigations, the chairperson must coordinate with the Program Manager for final report production (e.g., graphics, duplicating, binding).

The board chairperson may also request that board members assist in:

- Conducting corrective action plan reviews
- Conducting briefings at other sites
- Conducting briefings with various stakeholders
- Finalizing the report to include any late developments.

A briefing on the investigation's outcome to DOE Headquarters and field line management with cognizance over the site of the accident is required by DOE Order 225.1. This briefing is conducted by the board chairperson and the senior manager of the site at which the accident occurred. Accident investigation participants (chairperson, board members, and any consultants and advisers deemed appropriate by the chairperson) may attend the briefing. The briefing covers:

- The scope of the investigation, as provided in the appointment letter
- The investigation's participants, including any subject matter experts or other consultants

- A brief summary of the accident (*what happened*)
- Direct, contributing, and root causes (*why it happened*)
- Judgments of need (*what needs to be corrected*)
- Organizations that should be responsible for corrective actions.

Other briefings may be provided by the board chairperson and board members, as appropriate or if requested. These include briefing DOE and contractor line management at the site of the accident following factual accuracy validation of the report, and briefing the appointing official.

5.2.9 Managing Post-Investigation Activities

The chairperson is also responsible for ensuring that all information resulting from the investigation is carefully managed and controlled. To this end, the chairperson takes the following actions:

- **Releasing information to the public.** The chairperson should instruct board members not to communicate with the press or other external organizations regarding the investigation. External communications are the responsibility of the board chairperson until the final report is released. The board chairperson should work closely with a person designated by the site to release other information, such as statements to site employees and the public.
- **Archiving materials.** One of the final activities of the board is to place investigation documents and evidence in long-term storage. For Type A investigations, these materials are archived by the Program Manager. All factual material and analysis products are included, such as logbooks, board meeting minutes, field

notes, sketches, witness statements (including interview tapes, if used), photographs, location and custody of any physical evidence, analysis charts, and the various forms completed during the investigation. Medical or personnel records subject to the Privacy Act should be returned to their original location. The administrative coordinator arranges for archiving and for shipping materials to the archive repository during the onsite phase of the investigation.

5.3 Controlling the Investigation Process

Throughout the investigation, the board chairperson is responsible for controlling board performance, cost, schedule, and quality of work. Techniques for implementing these controls are described below.

5.3.1 Monitoring Performance and Providing Feedback

The chairperson uses daily meetings to monitor progress and to measure performance against the schedule of activity milestones. Board members are given specific functions or activities to perform and milestones for completion. The chairperson assesses the progress and status of the investigation periodically by asking such questions as:

- Is the investigation on schedule?
- Is the investigation within scope?
- Are board members, advisors, consultants, and support staff focused and effective?
- Are additional resources needed?

- Are daily board meetings still necessary and productive, or should the interval between them be increased?

The chairperson must be informed on the status of the accident investigation and must be prepared to make decisions and provide timely feedback to board members, site personnel, and other parties affected by the accident. Frequently, decisions must be made

when there is not time to reach consensus among the board members. When this occurs, the chairperson informs the board members of the decision and the reason for the urgency. Intermediate milestone revisions can then be made, if events or practical considerations so dictate.

5.3.2 Controlling Cost and Schedule

Cost and schedule must be controlled to ensure that planning and execution activities are within the established budget and milestones.

- **Cost Control**—The board chairperson is responsible for preparing a cost estimate for the activities to be conducted during the investigation and assuring that funds are available to support the investigation process, including costs associated with travel, advisors, and consultants. If necessary, the chairperson may issue a memo authorizing costs incurred by board members, including additional travel expenses, hotel rates over per diem, and incidental expenses. Control can be exercised over costs by using advisors and consultants only when required and by limiting travel (such as trips home for the weekend) during the onsite investigation. Coordination with the appropriate designee of the head of the field element should be made to ensure that the costs are being tracked during Type B investigations. The EH-21 Program Manager is the point of contact for these concerns during Type A investigations. A method for making estimates should be agreed upon early in the investigation, and the estimate should be reviewed each week to ensure that the cost of the work is not exceeding the estimate, or that the cost growth is justified and can be funded.

- **Schedule Control**—Progress against the schedule milestones can be assessed during daily progress meetings with the board and its staff. As problems arise, the schedule may be adjusted or resources applied to offset variances. Because of the relatively short timeframe involved, the chairperson must identify and resolve problems immediately to ensure the schedule is maintained or reevaluated with the appointing official as circumstances require.

5.3.3 Assuring Quality

Formal quality control measures are necessary because of the seriousness and sensitivity of the accident investigation board's work and because of the need for accuracy, thoroughness, and perspective. The chairperson has the prerogative to implement any quality assurance measures deemed necessary. At a minimum, the chairperson must ensure that the report is technically accurate, complete, and internally consistent. When analytical results are developed into conclusions, all verified facts, results of analyses of those facts, and the resulting conclusions must be both consistent and logical.

When essential portions of the draft report are complete, the chairperson conducts a requirements verification analysis to ensure that the facts are consistent with the best information available, that all report sections are consistent, and that analyses, causes, and judgments of need logically flow from the facts. Section 9 provides further detail on assuring report quality.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

During the accident investigation, the board chairperson is responsible for managing all aspects of the process, including planning and organizing, directing, and controlling the investigative process:

- Planning and organizing includes using project management techniques to organize the process and team, establish a schedule, plan, and assign specific tasks and milestones for completing them, acquire resources, and establish information access and other control protocols.
- Directing the investigative process involves developing the board into a team, leading communications, conducting feedback and decision-making activities, evaluating and modifying group processes, and managing investigative activities.
- Controlling the investigative process includes monitoring performance, providing feedback, controlling costs and schedule, and providing quality assurance.

Teamwork is important in assuring the investigation is completed on schedule with high quality. The chairperson should understand the importance of capitalizing on the four stages of team development (forming, storming, norming, and performing). The chairperson promotes effective teamwork by assuring a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, encouraging effective communications, providing clear explanations of expectations, obtaining agreement on decision-making methods and group processes, and working with board members to resolve potential problems.

The board chairperson has responsibility for representing DOE on all matters pertaining to board activities and the investigation by communicating with other DOE organizations and individuals, as well as external parties. These include the appointing official, DOE Headquarters managers, field managers, site managers, contractors, the media, unions, and other stakeholders with legitimate interests.

Information must be controlled to maintain the integrity of the investigation and preserve the privacy of those involved. Consequently, evidence, interview transcripts, personnel records, analytical and test results, and other material should be locked in a secured area to which only the board has access. Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act restrictions apply to most investigative materials. Coordinating press releases, developing protocols for control and release of information, and presenting awareness briefings to the board are common ways to help control sensitive investigation information.

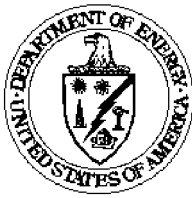
The onsite phase of the investigation is considered completed when:

- The board has reviewed the draft report for internal consistency, and site management and contractors have reviewed it for factual accuracy.
- The appointing official accepts the report.

The typical contents of a closeout briefing include:

- The scope of the investigation
- A summary of what happened
- The direct, contributing, and root causes of the accident
- Judgments of need
- Organizations that should be responsible for corrective actions.

The chairperson is responsible for ensuring that certain post-investigation activities are completed. These include: final editing and distribution of the report, briefings requested by Department officials, and archiving investigative files.



Accident Investigation Startup Activities List

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Description of Activity	Name of Designated Lead		
	HQ	Site	Other
Board Chairperson Responsibilities:			
Attend briefing by appointing official			
Assist in selecting, notifying, and briefing board members and consultants/advisors			
Identify all appropriate site authorities			
Obtain details of accident from site readiness team leader and other site parties			
Ensure that adequate evidence preservation and collection activities were initiated			
Begin identifying and collecting background and factual information			
Ask the EH-21 Program Manager to search for information about similar accidents			
Review all forwarded site and board member information			
Reassign normal business commitments			
Establish a preliminary accident investigation schedule, including milestones and deadlines			
Contact selected board members, consultants/advisors, and site personnel			
Arrange travel for self and expedite board travel arrangements			
Establish administrative support			
Determine that logistical support for the accident investigation is established			
Arrange for petty cash			
Travel to site			



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Description of Activity	Name of Designated Lead		
	HQ	Site	Other
Administrative Coordinator Responsibilities:			
Make hotel selection and reserve a block of rooms for the accident investigation team			
Determine site/field office points of contact for administrative and logistical support			
Arrange for local court reporter support for interviews			
Arrange for office/work space and furnishings for the accident investigation team			
Arrange for a large, dedicated conference room that can be locked when not in use by the accident investigation team			
Arrange for several small, hard-walled offices to be used when conducting interviews			
Arrange for security badges/passes for members of the accident investigation team			
Arrange for property permits for personal equipment (cameras, laptops, etc.) for members of the accident investigation team			
Arrange for specific security, access, safety, and health training, as required			
Arrange for dedicated telephone services and a fax machine			
Arrange for a dedicated, high-speed copy machine that has collating and stapling capability			
Obtain office supplies and consumables for use by the accident investigation team			
Arrange after-hours access to site and work space, and assume responsibility for all keys/cards provided by the site			



Accident Investigation Startup Activities List

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Description of Activity	Name of Designated Lead		
	HQ	Site	Other
Prepare and maintain the interview schedule			
Create and maintain accident investigation files			

Description of Activity	Name of Designated Lead		
	HQ	Site	Other
Arrange for an area central to work space to locate documents, lockable file cabinets, high-speed copy machine, large-volume document shredder(s), and fax machine			



Accident Investigation Preparatory Information Request Form

[illegible]